

OF ECUADOR

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of these two roofs serves to separate the building into two parts: one for the general living and sleeping room, the other for cooking. The structure is thus given the appearance of a double house, although the floors of the two rooms are always at the same level and the house is a unit in every respect except the roof. The double roof serves to exclude the smoke, which rises from the open fire-box in the kitchen, from the living and sleeping room. This division of the roof results in two inner gables, the eaves of which are brought within the area of the house itself (pl. XI, *h, i*) and under normal conditions would allow the rain-water to fall upon the floor. To prevent this, a large eaves-trough is made by hollowing out half of the long trunk of a species of palm locally called pambil (Cayapa, *bū'ĩñ-tcī*). The roof always projects a considerable distance beyond the edge of the floor, so that rain-water from the eaves falls at a distance of at least three or four feet from the sides of the building, and the eaves extend far enough down to prevent the wind from blowing the water back on the floor. As before stated, the ordinary dwellings have no sides, but their place is partly taken by a more or less elaborate railing, such as that shown in pl. v, which lessens the danger of one accidentally falling from the elevated floor. Raised platforms are frequently constructed at one or more points along the sides of the building. Such platforms are from four to ten feet in length and from four to seven feet in width, as are those shown in pl. XI, *c*. The roof is correspondingly extended to cover them. These platforms are raised usually

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4:Altschuler E-5 (1959-1960) 1965
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is favored. In these cases, it is always the rear of the house that is raised about four or five inches. The rear of the house is the cooking area, and it is here that the firebox is located. A common size for the firebox is four feet by five feet and it is packed with earth to a depth of four to six inches. Three rocks form a pot holder within which a fire is contained. There will generally be one such rock hearth for each related family resident in the house. Behind the kitchen area a bamboo ramp about three feet wide and twenty feet long serves the boys and men as a urinal; a hole about three feet out from the house serves the girls, women and infants.

The gabled roof is pitched at about a forty-five degree angle and is framed by long single lengths of bamboo. The thatch consists of the long leaves of the Tagua palm which may reach a length of fourteen to sixteen feet. From the midrib of the leaf, a series of leaflets extend out for approximately three feet. Two or three months before roofing, the leaves are cut down and collected in the Tagua patch and placed on a low bamboo rack for drying. Sometimes the Tagua patch is a considerable distance behind the house, in which

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